Heavenly Children

The Bright Star

Imam ar-Rida (A)

10

SUGGESTED AGES 7+

KISA KIDS PUBLICATIONS
Under the Guidance of Moulana Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

Disclaimer: Religious texts have ***not*** been translated verbatim so as to meet the developmental and comprehension needs of children.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the beloved Imām of our time (ʿaj).
May Allah (swt) hasten his reappearance and help us to become his true companions.

Original Author

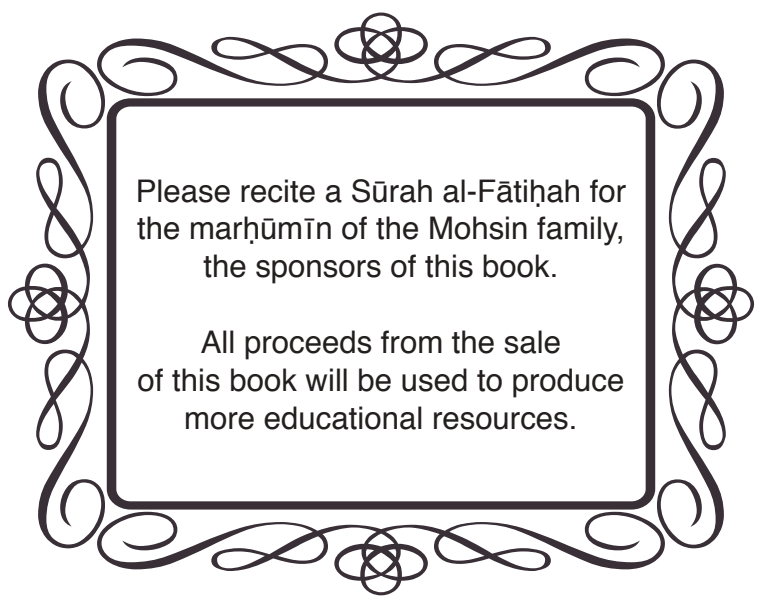
Abul Faḍl Hādī Manish

Acknowledgments

Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ): On the Day of Resurrection, the ink of the scholars will be weighed up against the blood of the martyrs, and the ink of the scholars will be heavier than the blood of the martyrs.
Nahj al-Faṣāḥah, Saying #3222.

True reward lies with Allah (swt), but we would like to sincerely thank Shaykh Salim Yusufali, Brother Aliakbar Shaheidari, Sisters Sabika Mithani, Fatemah Mithani, Amna Hussain, Asieh Zarghami, Zahra Sabur, Sajeda Merchant, Kisae Nazar, Sarah Assaf, Nadia Dossani, Fathema Abidi, Fatemeh Eslami, Fatima Hussain, Fatemah Meghji, Abeda Khimji, Sakeena Kalyan, Zehra Abbas, and Rumina Hashmani. We would especially like to thank Nainava Publications for their artwork and contributions.

May Allah (swt) bless them in this world and the next.


Please recite a Sūrah al-Fātiḥah for the marḥūmīn of the Mohsin family, the sponsors of this book.
All proceeds from the sale of this book will be used to produce more educational resources.

Transliteration Chart

Arabic terms in this book have been transliterated according to the following guidelines*:

ء	a, i, or u (initial form)
ء	ʾ (medial or final form)
ا	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	ʿ
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y

ـَ	a
ـِ	i
ـُ	u
ـّ	double letter
آ / ـَا / ىٰ	ā
ـِي	ī
ـُو	ū

*Please note that due to limitations, the transliteration is not 100% accurate in capturing tajwīd rules.

Preface

Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ):
Nurture and raise your children in the best way. Raise them with the love of the Prophets and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa).

Literature is an influential form of media that often shapes the thoughts and views of an entire generation. Therefore, in order to establish an Islamic foundation for the future generations, there is a dire need for compelling Islamic literature. Over the past several years, this need has become increasingly prevalent throughout Islamic centers and schools everywhere. Due to the growing dissonance between parents, children, society, and the teachings of Islam and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), this need has become even more pressing. Al-Kisa Foundation, along with its subsidiary, Kisa Kids Publications, was conceived in an effort to help bridge this gap with the guidance of ʿulamāʾ and the help of educators. We would like to make this a communal effort and platform. Therefore, we sincerely welcome constructive feedback and help in any capacity.

The goal of the *Heavenly Children* series is to foster the love of Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) in children and to help them establish the 14 Maʿṣūmīn as their role models. We hope that you and your children enjoy these books and use them as a means to achieve this goal, inshāʾAllāh. We pray to Allah to give us the strength and *tawfīq* to perform our duties and responsibilities.

With Duʿās,
Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

About the Board ʿĀlim

Moulana Nabi R. Mir (Abidi) is a scholar, an educator, a father, and an enthusiast for creating educational infrastructure and Islamic resources for the benefit of the global community. Always wanting to think 'outside of the box' by supporting the creation of innovative materials to engage young readers to pick up Islamic books, interact with Qurʾānic games, learn from the Steps to Perfection Curriculum, and begin their life-long journey of holistic education.

Being a dedicated student and graduate of *Darse Khārij* from the *Ḥawzah* (the Highest Level of Islamic Studies in the Seminary), Moulana Abidi knows the value of Islamic education. Also, having grown up in India, and now residing in the United States, he has had the honor of traveling to various communities and meeting many community leaders. He values the importance of collaboration and working together to optimize potentials, and to create open source platforms so that information and resources are available and accessible to everyone around the world.

You, dear reader, are now part of the Al-Kisa family.
Share the word, and join the mission.

Ahmad's family was discussing their trip to visit the fourteen Maʿṣūmīn. Ahmad was curious to learn a little bit about each of the divine personalities they would be visiting. Baba had just told him about Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa) as a child.

"It sounds like Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was a great student," Ahmad thought out loud. "Is the next Imām also buried with him in Kāẓimayn?"

"No," Mama said. "Imām ʿAlī ar-Riḍā, our eighth Imām (ʿa), is actually buried in Mashhad, Iran. That's quite a distance away from Kāẓimayn, Kūfah, and Medina, where the rest of the Maʿṣūmīn can be visited."

"Huh, those other places are in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, right? Why is Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa) buried so far away? Was he born there, on a trip his parents took maybe?" Ahmad asked.

"Actually, Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa) was born in Medina on the 11th of Dhul Qaʿdah to Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa) and Haḍrat Najmah, and no, his parents never went on a trip there," Mama answered with a sigh.

Ahmad was confused, "Then how did he end up in Mashhad?"

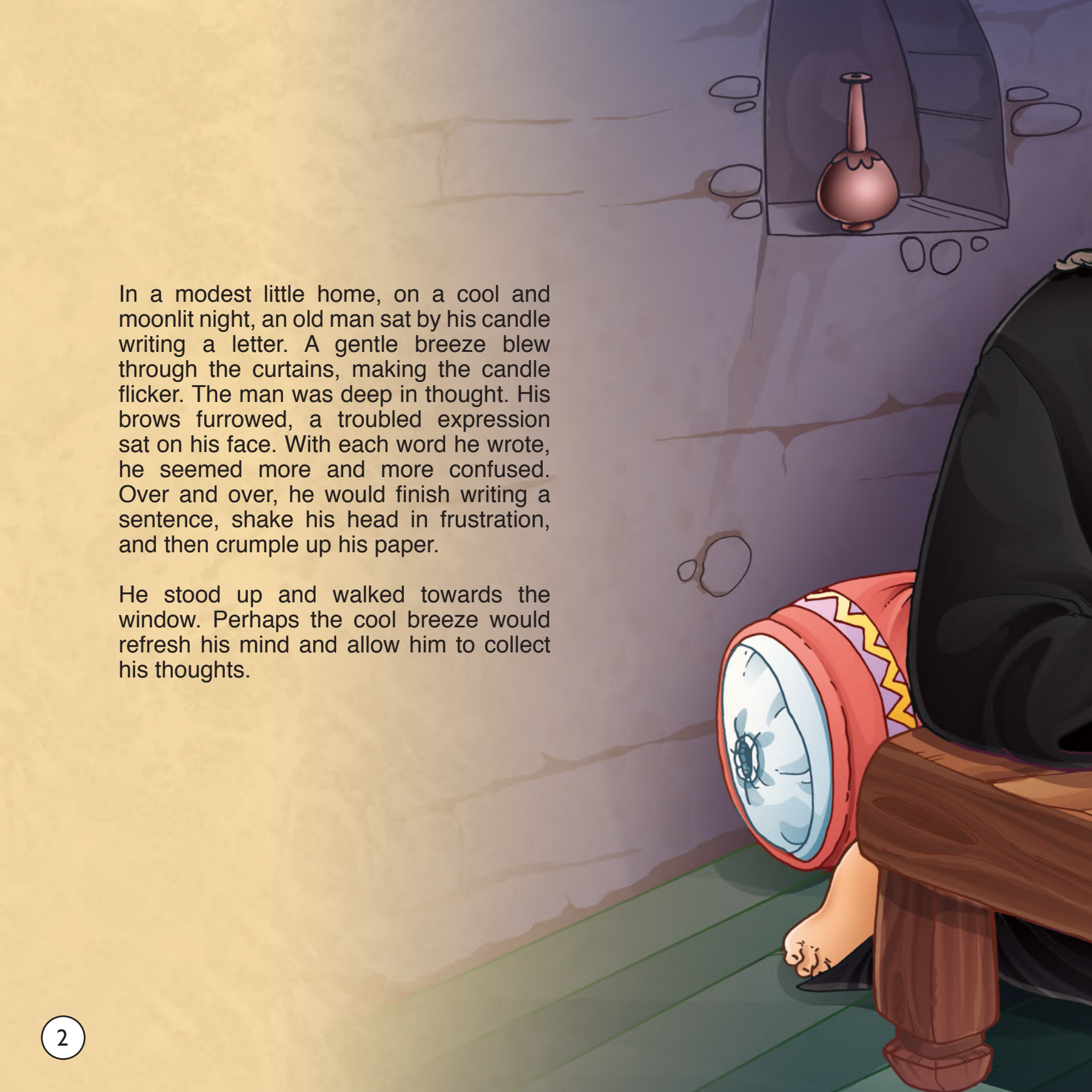
"It's a sad story," Baba said. "After Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) was martyred and Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa) became the Imām, the evil caliph, Maʿmūn, knew that Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa) was very intelligent and popular. This made him very jealous of the Imām (ʿa). He didn't want people to turn away from him and follow the Imām, so he came up with a plan. He invited the Imām to come to him in Merv, which is near Mashhad, to become his successor."

"His successor? Really?" Ahmad asked.

"Yes, but as Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa) knew, it was a trick to make it easier for Maʿmūn to keep an eye on him. The Imām (ʿa) refused the invitation. So, Maʿmūn forced him to accept the position. Naturally, Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa) took advantage of where he was, using it as an opportunity to teach people about Islam. He would hold majālis and tell people about Karbala and the mission of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa). People would come from all over to learn from him, and Maʿmūn realized his trick was backfiring. The Imām (ʿa) was attracting people to Islam, so he decided to poison Imām ar-Riḍā (ʿa). The Imām (ʿa) was martyred on the 29th of Ṣafar and is buried in Mashhad."

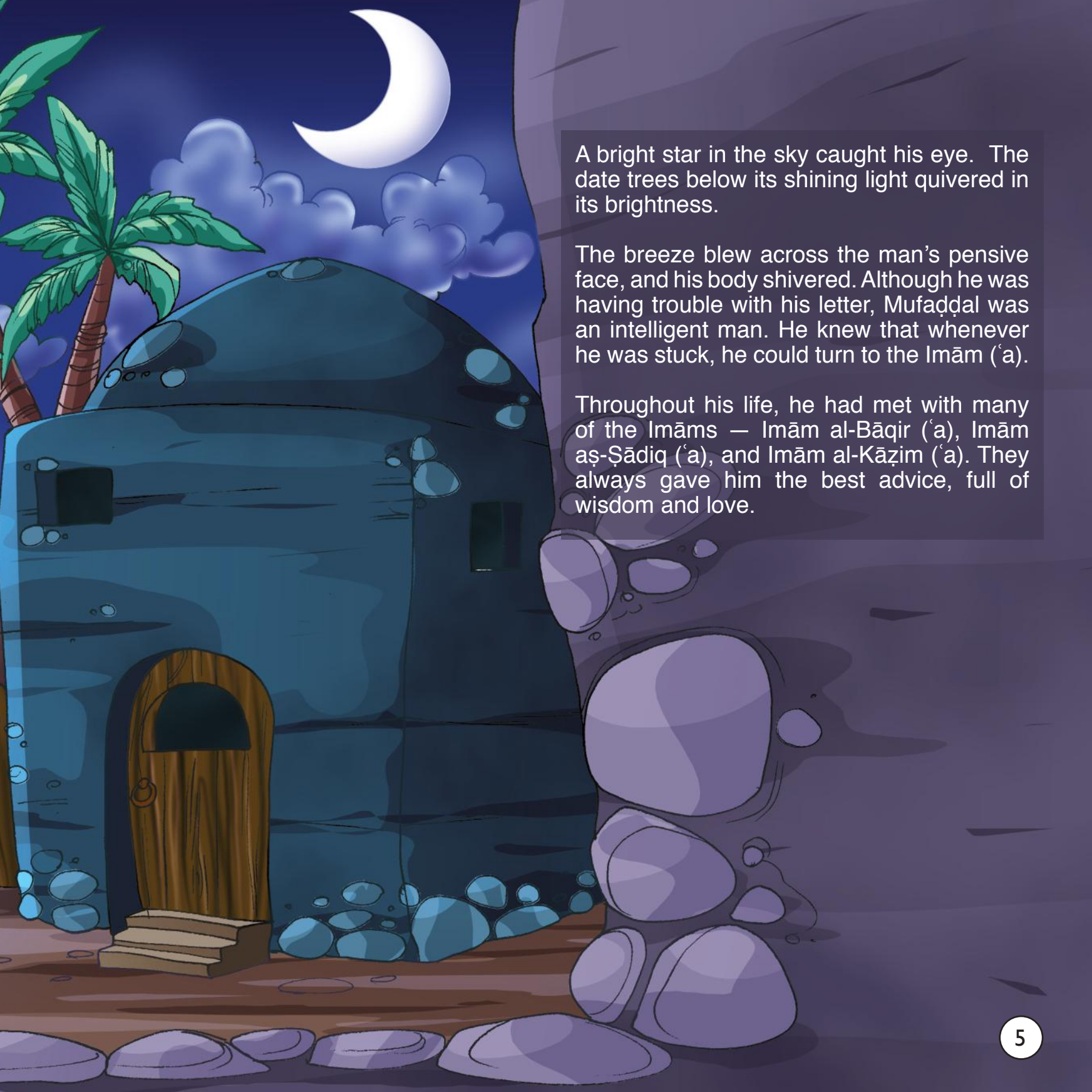
"Maʿmūn was such a bad person! What an awful thing to do to an Imām (ʿa). He was helping people!" Ahmad reflected sadly. "Could you tell me a story about when he was young?"

"Of course! Bismillāh... " said Mama.



In a modest little home, on a cool and moonlit night, an old man sat by his candle writing a letter. A gentle breeze blew through the curtains, making the candle flicker. The man was deep in thought. His brows furrowed, a troubled expression sat on his face. With each word he wrote, he seemed more and more confused. Over and over, he would finish writing a sentence, shake his head in frustration, and then crumple up his paper.

He stood up and walked towards the window. Perhaps the cool breeze would refresh his mind and allow him to collect his thoughts.



A bright star in the sky caught his eye. The date trees below its shining light quivered in its brightness.

The breeze blew across the man's pensive face, and his body shivered. Although he was having trouble with his letter, Mufaḍḍal was an intelligent man. He knew that whenever he was stuck, he could turn to the Imām (ʿa).

Throughout his life, he had met with many of the Imāms — Imām al-Bāqir (ʿa), Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa), and Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa). They always gave him the best advice, full of wisdom and love.

Mufaḍḍal gazed up at the bright star again. Like that bright star, the Imām (ʿa) was his guiding light. He decided to put on his warm scarf and shoes and go for a walk. The air seemed chillier as he strode out the door, but the shining star winked at him, as though encouraging him to keep going.

The rustling date leaves waved in the wind, as if beckoning him to Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim's house. Mufaḍḍal strode quickly through the quiet streets until he found himself at the Imām's doorstep.

Now that Mufaḍḍal had arrived, he felt uncertain coming at such a late hour. He lifted his hand to knock, but quickly let it drop to his side.

It's really late for a visitor. Maybe I shouldn't disturb the Imām (ʿa), he thought to himself.

He turned around, stepping off the doorstep to leave. Suddenly, he heard a voice call out, "Mufaḍḍal!" It was the kind voice of his Imām (ʿa)! Surprised but relieved, Mufaḍḍal gently knocked on the door.

As the door swung open, Mufaḍḍal saw the bright face of his Imām (ʿa), inviting him inside. Mufaḍḍal noticed a sweet child playing behind him. The Imām (ʿa) welcomed Mufaḍḍal into his house and led him into a simple room.

The Imām (ʿa) sat down, and Mufaḍḍal followed. The young child climbed onto his father's back. Mufaḍḍal smiled at the boy, who was now playing on the shoulders of the Imām (ʿa). The child kept climbing onto the Imām's (ʿa) back and sliding down, all the while laughing with delight. The Imām (ʿa) would smile at the child, kiss him, and then help him back onto his shoulders.

Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) returned his attention to Mufaḍḍal. "Please, Mufaḍḍal," he said, "ask your questions!"

Mufaḍḍal began asking his questions one by one. With each answer the Imām (ʿa) gave, Mufaḍḍal felt a growing sense of peace and tranquility in his heart.

As he spoke to Mufaḍḍal, the Imām (ʿa) continued playing with the little boy. Whenever he looked at the young child, Mufaḍḍal realized he felt warmth and contentment in his heart.

The conversation soon subsided. Suddenly, Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) picked up his son in his arms. “May my father and mother be sacrificed for you!* You are so dear to me!” he declared affectionately.

Upon hearing this, another question came to Mufaḍḍal’s lips. “May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, my beloved Imām (ʿa)!” he said. “I feel a strange pull of love towards this young child; he has given me a special joy that I have only felt for the Imāms. Who is this child?”

The Imām’s face beamed with happiness, and he placed his hand on the young child’s shoulder. “Dear Mufaḍḍal, this is my son ʿAlī ar-Riḍā (ʿa). He is to me like I was to my father,” he explained.

Mufaḍḍal felt his heart skip a beat. He had heard this exact same sentence before!

*In our ḥadīth and duʿās, when someone wants to show the highest level of loyalty and love towards another person, they use this expression.

The sentence began playing again and again in his mind. *So,* he thought, his mind racing*, if this child has the same relationship to his father that Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) had to his father, then this means…*

Excitedly, he asked, “My Imām, will this young child be the Imām after you?!”

Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) looked at Mufaḍḍal and smiled. “Yes! Anyone who follows him will find the right path, and anyone who does not obey him will be misguided.”

Mufaḍḍal nodded with understanding. He felt overjoyed that, in addition to getting all his questions answered, he was also able to meet the next Imām!

After some time, Mufaḍḍal felt it was time to leave and let the Imāms rest. He bid the Imāms (ʿa) farewell, kissed their hands, and walked out into the open air with a grin.

He stood outside the Imām's door for a little while and noticed that the date trees were no longer swaying in the wind, and the night sky had cleared up. He tilted his head back to see that the bright star was now right above the Imām's house. As he took a closer look at the date trees, he noticed that their leaves seemed to be pointing right at the bright star. Mufaḍḍal smiled to himself, admiring how even nature seemed to be drawn to the guiding presence of the Imāms. Satisfied and at peace, he made his way home.

Uyūn Akhbār ar-Riḍā (ʿa), Vol. 1, Ch. 4, Ḥadīth #28

Glossary

(ṣ): Peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muḥammad and his family

(swt): All Glory belongs to God, the Glorified and Exalted

(ʿa): Peace and blessings be upon him/her

(ʿaj): May God hasten his reappearance

Ahl al-Bayt: Divinely appointed family members of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)

Akhlāq: Islamic morals and ethics

al-Fātiḥah: The first *sūrah* of the Qurʾān, which is commonly recited and sent as a gift of prayer for the deceased

Alḥamdulillāh: All praise is for God

Baba: Father

Bismillāh: (I begin) in the name of God

Duʿāʾ: Supplication; a deep connection and communication between an individual and God

Imām: A divinely appointed leader, sometimes refers to a spiritual leader

InshāʾAllāh: God-willing

Kaʿbah: The most Sacred Mosque for Muslims, situated in Mecca and is the direction of prayer

Majālis: A special gathering

Mama: Mother

Marḥūmīn: Someone who has passed away

MāshāʾAllāh: As God wishes

Maʿṣūmīn: One who is inerrant (free of all sins, flaws, and impurities) through the divine protection and knowledge of Allah

Qurʾān: The holy book of Muslims

SubḥānAllāh: All Glory and Praise belongs to God

Tawfīq: Divine blessings from God (Allah) that give one the opportunity and ability to thrive towards success

Ziyārah: Visiting the house of Allah, grave of the Noble Prophet, Imāms and other important personalities

ʿUlamāʾ: Scholars

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